

ESU - Working Hours Proposal

As members will now be aware the Bank wants to introduce a new system of working hours for staff in the Manchester Estates Settlement Unit, in order to cope better with seasonal fluctuations in work volumes. The Bank has told LTU that the Department's workload increases by approximately one third during the 'Winter' months December to March compared to the rest of the year.

The Bank's proposals, which LTU broadly supports, is to offer staff the opportunity to change the hours they work between these two periods as follows:

- **for the period December to March, staff would be asked to work a 45 hour week between the hours of 7.30am and 5.30pm**
- **for the remaining 8 months of the year, April to November, staff would only work a 30 hour week between the hours of 7.30am and 2.30pm.**

The Bank would like to introduce the new arrangements from September this year.

As part of the proposals salary would continue to be paid monthly in 12 equal instalments but leave entitlement would be managed in hours

rather than days to reflect the different length in working day between the two periods. For example, 28 days holiday entitlement would equate to 32 days 4 hours taken in the summer as opposed to only 21 days 7 hours in the winter. The Bank has yet to confirm that the proposal will not restrict staff's ability to take holiday at whatever time of year they wish.

Central to our negotiations has been the issue of voluntarism. Whilst this proposal is likely to prove popular with many staff it is imperative that members are not pressurised into changing their hours.

Although the Bank has said it will work closely with staff to address any difficulties they may have in moving to this new system, ultimately staff are under no obligation to provide reasons for not wanting to change and must not be penalised in any way for not doing so. This includes the threat of redeployment to other work.

A number of issues remain to be resolved and our negotiations continue. For further advice or assistance on this, or any matter, members should phone the Union's 24 Hour Advice Line on 01234 262868 to speak to a full time Official for independent, professional advice and assistance.

NICK HOLT

Assistant General Secretary

